Felsted

EQUALITY POLICY

WHOLE SCHOOL
INCLUDING EYFS AND BOARDING

Committee normally reviewing :	SLT
Date last formally approved :	Autumn Term 2024
Date policy became effective :	November 2009

Period of Review:	Three Years
Next Review Date :	Autumn Term 2027

Person responsible for implementation and monitoring :	Heads
Other relevant policies :	• Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy • Staff Behaviour Policy • Safer Recruitment Policy and Process • Accessibility Plan • Complaints Policy and Procedure • Equal Opportunities Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Behaviour and Discipline Policy

The following Policy encompasses the Aims and Ethos of the Senior School

Aims and Ethos

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT
Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and the Staff Behaviour Policy'.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT
The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Statement of Intent

This policy is based on the Equality Act 2010, with latest updates in June 2014, together with the aims of the school, specifically the equal opportunities statement.

1. BASIC PRINCIPLES

1.1 Every member of the school is of equal worth and importance, irrespective of

- age
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion and/or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership

and those of their associates (e.g. parents of pupils, partners and children of employees).

1.2 A good education for all our pupils is possible only if Equality practices are an integral feature of all aspects of the life of the school.

1.3 Equality practices should be evident in

- the formal curriculum (the programme of lessons);
- the informal curriculum (co-curricular activities);
- the 'hidden' curriculum (the ethos of the school, the quality of personal relationships etc).

1.4 All members of the School should be aware of our Equality Policy. This includes pupils, teaching staff, education support staff, Governors and parents. Equality and diversity training is made available for staff.

1.5 Any member of the School acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of the policy should be made aware of the unacceptable nature of his/her behaviour. If necessary any incidents will be dealt with as per the relevant school policy, including the Schools behaviour policies for pupils and staff.

Equal opportunities issues should be seen as inter-related and as applying to all aspects of our school life. This should be kept in mind when reading the points outlined below, which cover some principal areas.

2. EQUALITY OF ACCESS AND PROVISION FOR ALL PUPILS

2.1 We accept applications from, and admit, all prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs. The School will not be abel to offer a place to a child with disabilities only if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

2.2 We aim to create and provide equality of access to the curriculum, facilities and opportunities within the school, as far as is practically possible, for every pupil.

2.3 Every pupil also has the right to be appropriately supported and challenged educationally, whatever their level of achievement and understanding.

2.4 We aim to create an environment where every pupil can find activities and interests, from amongst a wide range offered, which inspire and engage them.

2.5 Every pupil has the right to feel secure, valued, and cared for with equal and consistent pastoral care and attention as appropriate.

2.6 Every pupil has the democratic right to be part of ‘Student Voice’, while respecting the role of the Governors and Head to set appropriate parameters for the school community.

3. RELIGION

3.1 We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith, others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

3.2 In general, all pupils are expected to attend chapel services as part of the school routine. However, some pupils whose religious belief is not Christian may, in liaison with their HM and the chaplain, be excused from chapel so that they can use this time to follow their own religious practices.

3.3 If traditional boarders, who are not members of the Church of England, wish to attend other religious services outside of school, the school will try to support and assist with this if possible. For day, contemporary and weekly boarders, parents will normally make any necessary arrangements.

3.4 With regard to the teaching of TEP (Theology, Ethics and Philosophy), we consider that the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We seek to encourage and nurture the development of personal faith in a climate of tolerance and respect, by encouraging pupils to consider their beliefs and values, consistent with the School’s Christian ethos and foundation.

4. CULTURE, BACKGROUNDAND RACE

4.1 We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.

4.2 We recognise the inequalities of opportunity which can exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life.

4.3 We understand, value and celebrate the need to be different, without being excluded by others, while conforming to the basic rules and expectations of the School.

4.4 We value the history, experience and contribution of members of our international community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school: all members should feel that their language and culture is valued and that bilingualism is regarded as advantageous. We try to counter negative, patronising and stereotypical views: a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding.

4.5 We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form.

5. GENDER

5.1 As a co-educational school, we constantly examine our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality.

5.2 We encourage pupils to be aware of the rigid sex stereotypes presented by, for example, the media. We try to ensure that our resources include books which value the achievements of women as well as men, to invite female role models as speakers, and to ensure that girls and boys are appointed in approximately equal numbers to positions of responsibility within the pupil body.

5.3 We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions in terms of activities and opportunities.

5.4 We try to ensure

- that teachers allocate their time fairly between genders,
- that we encourage critical thinking about gender bias in digital spaces, including social media and artificial intelligence, and strive to provide resources that reflect diverse role models.
- that all pupils have opportunities for working with pupils of different genders,
- that we break down traditional gender stereotypes (for example by not asking boys to move furniture while girls tidy up),
- that pupils have opportunities for examining their own pre-conceived ideas of gender-roles,
- that pupils are encouraged to pursue the widest possible range of subjects and interests, and that, wherever possible, classes have appropriate groupings of boys and girls.

5.5 We do not differentiate between genders in respect of our expectations towards school uniform. Boys and girls are expected to follow uniform rules. The Head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the

School's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

5.6 We acknowledge the importance of effective links with parents and pupils in monitoring and furthering the progress of this policy.

6. SEXUALITY

6.1 As a school, we make no assumptions about the sexuality or sexual orientation of any of our members.

6.2 A pupil who is transgender or non-binary will be supported with compassion and sensitivity, in consultation with them and their family. For more detail, see the Transgender Policy.

6.3 In our curriculum, sexuality is taught within the context of loving relationships. Whilst heterosexual relationships are the most common in our society, we acknowledge that a number of our pupils will be of a homosexual or bisexual orientation, and may be transgender. Discussion of homosexuality and transgender is therefore included in the sex education programme. In addition, pupils' questions are answered, as they arise, as honestly, factually and non-judgmentally as possible.

6.4 Derogatory name-calling (of any sort) is unacceptable.

6.5 Harassment, including cyberbullying related to gender identity or sexual orientation, will not be tolerated and will be addressed under the school's behaviour policies.

7. LEARNING SUPPORT AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

7.1 We welcome pupils who require learning support or have special educational needs. We undertake to assess and meet the needs of all our pupils as far as we are able. We aim to create a happy and educationally exciting environment in which all pupils can prosper.

7.2 The School’s Disability and Special Educational Needs Policy outlines our commitment to supporting the admission, entry, learning, accessibility, reasonable adjustments and behaviour of pupils with special educational needs.

7.3 Because pupils develop at different rates for different activities, we adopt a child-centred approach to learning which is based on each pupil's needs.

8. DISABILITY

Disability is defined as when a person has a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term negative effect on that person’s ability to do normal day to day activities.’

8.1 In some circumstances, it may be necessary to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils. This will be done by making reasonable adjustments to ensure full participation in school activities as far as is practicable. For example, this would include making sure that opportunities are specifically pointed out to a child who may have missed information because of absence due to their condition. Provision for disabled pupils is closely connected with the regime for children with special educational needs.

8.2 As renovations and new builds take place, every consideration is taken to make as much of the site as possible accessible to pupils with any additional needs, as per the School's Accessibility Plan.

8.3 All staff are expected to take into account any special needs or disabilities when planning their lessons, so that all pupils are not penalised and can fulfil their potential. Staff receive regular training on supporting neurodivergent students and students with mental health conditions, ensuring inclusive teaching methods.

9. REVIEW

The application of this policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly by The Heads and Senior Leadership Teams every three years.